

A report on
Ysgol Gymunedol Maenclochog

Maenclochog
Clunderwen
Pembrokeshire
SA66 7LB

Date of inspection: May 2026

by

Estyn, His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales

This report is also available in Welsh

About Ysgol Gymunedol Maenclochog

Name of provider	Ysgol Gymunedol Maenclochog
Local authority	Pembrokeshire County Council
Language of the provider	Welsh
School category according to Welsh-medium provision	Welsh
Type of school	Primary
Religious character	
Number of pupils on roll	98
Pupils of statutory school age	80
Number in nursery classes	9
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average (The national percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals over a three-year average in the primary sector is 22.9%)	9.5%
Percentage of pupils identified as having additional learning needs (a) (The national percentage of pupils identified as having an additional learning need in the primary sector is 11.1%)	16.3%
Percentage of pupils who speak Welsh at home	40.0%
Percentage of pupils with English as an additional language	0.0%
Lead partner in Initial teacher education	No
Date of headteacher appointment	01/01/2022

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May 2026

Date of previous Estyn inspection (if applicable)	13/05/2024
Start date of inspection	11/05/2026

Data reported is sourced from the latest available Pupil Level Annual School Census. These figures may be slightly different to those observed during the inspection.

Further information is available from the Welsh Government My Local School website:

mylocalschool.gov.wales

- a. The term 'additional learning needs' is being used to describe those pupils on the SEN/ALN register of the school.

Summary

The school is a caring and welcoming community where pupils feel safe and benefit from positive relationships with staff and their peers. The headteacher and leaders place a clear emphasis on well-being, belonging, Welshness and inclusion. This helps most pupils to develop positive attitudes to their learning and to behave respectfully when working and playing.

Over time, many pupils make good progress in their skills. They develop their oral and reading skills purposefully, and many write appropriately in Welsh and English. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities for extended writing in different contexts across the curriculum. Many pupils also develop appropriate mathematical skills, but do not apply their numeracy skills often enough in practical and challenging activities.

Staff plan interesting experiences that enrich pupils' learning, including performance, creative activities, community work, sports and eisteddfodau. This contributes to pupils' confidence, their pride in their school and their sense of belonging to their community. Teachers provide valuable oral feedback to pupils. However, written feedback does not lead consistently enough to improvements in pupils' work.

Staff support pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) purposefully, and this support helps many of them to make progress from their starting points. Pupils have valuable opportunities to voice opinions and take responsibility through the 'Senedd' and the different cabinets, namely the school committees.

Leaders have identified relevant priorities. However, improvement work does not always show a clear enough effect on pupils' standards and progress.

The school is part of a federation with Ysgol Gymunedol Brynconin.

Recommendations

We have made two recommendations to help the school continue to improve:

- R1 Further develop the opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy and writing skills across the curriculum
- R2 Ensure that learning experiences challenge pupils consistently and that teachers' feedback supports pupils to improve their work.

What happens next

The school will draw up an action plan to address the recommendations from the inspection.

Main evaluation

The school is a caring, inclusive and familial community that is a core part of its local community. Leaders place a clear emphasis on creating a safe and supportive environment which supports pupils' wellbeing effectively. Staff foster positive relationships with pupils and respond sensitively to the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. As a result, almost all pupils are happy in their learning and play and feel safe at school.

Over time, many pupils make good progress in their skills. Most develop their oral skills well. They listen attentively to instructions from adults and the contributions of their peers and respond appropriately. Most speak confidently by using a rich range of vocabulary when discussing their experiences.

The youngest pupils develop their reading skills successfully. As they move through the school, many read with clear expression and find information from a range of texts purposefully. By the top of the school, most read fluently in both Welsh and English and apply their reading skills across the curriculum purposefully.

Many pupils develop their Welsh and English writing skills suitably. The youngest pupils acquire early writing skills by experimenting with mark-making. They recognise letters and sounds and link them to write simple words correctly. As their skills develop, many use a good range of punctuation, spell more complex words correctly and use rich adjectives

when creating interesting descriptions. However, the opportunities for them to write extendedly in various contexts across the areas of learning and experience are limited.

Many pupils make appropriate progress in their mathematics skills. The youngest pupils acquire mathematical skills consistently; for example, they collect data purposefully. By the top of the school, they use a range of calculation methods confidently and accurately. However, the provision does not support pupils to apply their numeracy skills consistently enough across the curriculum.

Many pupils make suitable progress in developing their digital skills. They use these skills to support their learning in relevant contexts and have a robust understanding of how to work safely online.

Across the school, almost all pupils develop strong physical skills over time, for example through gymnastics, swimming, a range of sports games and cross-country running. Staff help most pupils develop the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Staff provide purposeful and rich opportunities to develop pupils' creative skills across the school. Pupils in Years 2 perform the bee dance in the yard effectively, by planning movements and controlling sound equipment purposefully. Many pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to perform and compete, such as in rehearsals for eisteddfodau, which make a valuable contribution to developing their confidence, social skills and pride in their Welsh culture and identity.

Many of the oldest pupils develop a sound awareness of other cultures by comparing their lives with children in Lesotho. There are regular opportunities to support pupils to develop their spiritual and moral understanding, including about traditions related to world religions. Staff also support pupils' personal and social development valuably, including their understanding of the characteristics of healthy relationships.

Staff have established positive working relationships with pupils that are based on respect and trust. They use a range of methods to support pupils' behaviour skilfully, and as a result, most pupils engage purposefully with their learning, work well together and show respect for each other. Staff use skilful techniques to ask pupils probing questions to support pupils to recall previous learning, encourage them to think more deeply about their learning and challenge them to offer extended responses.

There is a purposeful pace to learning and teachers encourage and support pupils to develop their independent learning skills successfully. Teachers work together purposefully to deliver a curriculum that offers a range of rich and interesting experiences

that spark many pupils' interest and meet their needs well. However, activities do not always challenge a few pupils effectively enough.

On the whole, teachers provide timely oral feedback that supports many pupils to know what they have done well. However, written feedback by teachers is not purposeful enough and, as a result, does not support pupils to improve their work consistently enough.

The school provides effective support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). Staff work purposefully with a variety of agencies and act on expert guidance and advice. As a result, almost all pupils with ALN make sound progress in their skills over time. The school also responds purposefully to the emotional, health and social needs of almost all pupils by offering interventions that enable them to engage positively with their learning. Teaching assistants are valuable members of the school team and work diligently and skilfully to support pupils to make progress in their skills.

A strong element of provision is the broad and meaningful opportunities for pupils to undertake leadership roles. For example, almost all pupils are a member of the school's Cabinet or represent within the school's Senedd. This develops their confidence, leadership skills and ability to have an effective influence on the life and work of the school. The 'Darllenwyr Dawnus', for example, have organised beneficial activities that have promoted more positive attitudes to reading among their peers.

The school has effective arrangements in place to monitor pupils' punctuality and attendance rates. They promote the importance of good attendance and work closely with families and the welfare officer, as appropriate.

The headteacher provides caring and purposeful leadership and promotes a clear vision for the school. This vision places a clear emphasis on well-being, belonging, Welshness, inclusion and raising pupils' aspirations. As a result, the school fosters a positive ethos where staff know pupils and their families well and promote pupils' pride in their school and community. Leaders have established an inclusive and supportive culture. They pay appropriate attention to pupils' wellbeing and ensure that staff respond sensitively to the needs of individuals and groups of pupils.

Leaders use an appropriate range of self-evaluation activities that help identify a number of the school's many strengths and begin to prioritise the aspects that need improvement. On the whole, they plan relevant actions to address the areas for development. On the whole, there is an appropriate track record of improvement at the school, although areas such as feedback, challenge, and writing continue to develop.

The school is part of a federation with Ysgol Brynconin, which means that they work closely together on a number of key areas. Leaders distribute roles and responsibilities appropriately and include staff in aspects of the federation's improvement work. This helps to foster a sense of teamwork and supports staff to contribute to the schools' priorities. Professional learning is linked appropriately to a number of the federation's priorities. Staff receive beneficial opportunities for cooperation, receive training and develop aspects of reading, ALN, wellbeing and pedagogy.

The governing body is supportive and aware of the federation's main priorities. Governors receive relevant information about a good range of the school's work and participate in some monitoring activities. On the whole, governors fulfil their role as critical friends appropriately but are not always probing enough in challenging the effect of improvement actions on pupils' standards and progress.

Leaders foster extremely positive partnerships with parents and the community. These links support pupils' wellbeing, enrich their experiences and strengthen the relationship between the schools and their communities. Parents appreciate the caring nature of the staff and the wide range of opportunities available to pupils.

Additional information

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are not a cause for concern.

The school's arrangements for the management of the site are not a cause for concern.

The school has appropriate arrangements for promoting healthy eating and drinking.

Leaders and governors manage the school's funding appropriately, including the use of the pupil development grant.

Evidence base of the report

Before an inspection, inspectors:

- analyse the outcomes from the parent/carers and pupil questionnaires and consider the views of teachers and the governing body through their questionnaire responses

During an inspection, inspectors normally:

- hold a meeting with parents/carers to hear their views on the school and its effectiveness
- meet the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders (where appropriate) and individual teachers to evaluate the impact of the school's work
- meet pupils to discuss their work, to listen to them read and to gain their views about various aspects of their school
- meet groups of pupils in leadership roles, such as representatives from the school council and eco-committee
- visit a broad sample of classes, including learning support groups and undertake a variety of learning walks to observe pupils learning and to see staff teaching in a range of settings, including classrooms, support groups and in outdoor areas
- where appropriate, visit the specialist resource base within the school to see pupils' learning
- observe and speak to pupils at lunch and break times and at a sample of after-school clubs, where appropriate
- attend assemblies and daily acts of collective worship
- look closely at the school's self-evaluation processes
- consider the school's improvement plan and look at evidence to show how well the school has taken forward planned improvements
- scrutinise a range of school documents, including information on pupil assessment and progress, records of meetings of staff and the governing body, information on pupils' well-being, including the safeguarding of pupils, and records of staff training and professional development

After the on-site inspection and before the publication of the report, Estyn:

- review the findings of the inspection alongside the supporting evidence from the inspection team in order to validate, moderate and ensure the quality of the inspection

Appendix 1: Numbers – quantities and proportions

The report makes references to different quantities and proportions e.g. ‘*most pupils...*’ or ‘*very few pupils...*’. We use these terms to describe quantities and proportions as outlined in the table below:

nearly all =	with very few exceptions
most =	90% or more
many =	70% or more
a majority =	over 60%
half =	50%
around half =	close to 50%
a minority =	below 40%
few =	below 20%
very few =	less than 10%

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.wales)

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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